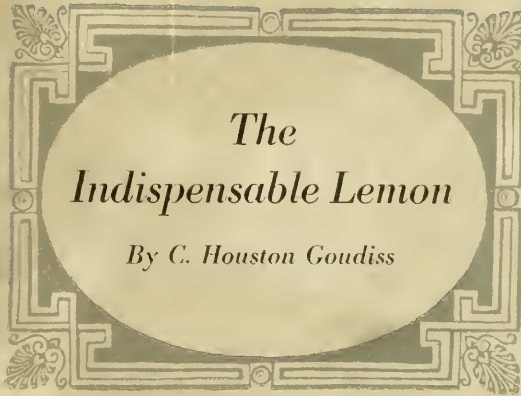


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The Indispensable Lemon

The Ben Franklin of Fruits—As Many-sided
as the Famous Philadelphian

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The Indispensable Lemon

THE BEN FRANKLIN OF FRUITS—
AS MANY-SIDED AS THE FAMOUS
PHILADELPHIAN

NOWADAYS lemons are so commonly seen in so many kinds of shops and are so widely used in all homes, that it smacks of fairy-tale talk to say that once upon a time—several thousands of years ago—this invaluable fruit was regarded solely as an antidote for certain poisons.

Yet, in ancient historical records we find mention of its juice having saved the lives of men thought to be dying from the effect of snake bites—and here arises a gleam of hope for those short-sighted folk who bewail prohibition because it denies us a reputed sovereign remedy in such cases!

So useful a fruit as the lemon could not long keep its light hid under a bushel, however, and for many centuries it has been increasingly employed in nearly all countries.

From its native home in northwest India, where it grows wild, it has been carried to cultivation in far-separated sections of the globe. In the early part of the Christian era it was introduced to southern Europe, and took root principally in the island

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

of Sicily, which gained a world-wide reputation for producing the finest of lemons, and held first place until the soil and climate of California and Florida proved still more ideal for citrus fruits.

To-day the finest lemons are American-grown, and so swiftly has this industry developed within three decades that importations of Italian and Spanish fruit have largely diminished—simply another illustration of this country's ability to satisfy all its food needs.

A Fruit that Is a Food Need

BOTANICALLY, the lemon belongs to the citrus family, that group so important to health, which includes the orange, lime, grapefruit, pomelo, tangerine, kumquat and pomegranate.

The lemon branch of this family is itself numerous, there being more than half a hundred different varieties. While these differ as to size, flavor and individual characteristics such as thickness of rind and color, they are largely alike in their inherent qualities.

Like pears, they must be picked green and allowed to ripen off the tree in order to be at their best. If permitted to remain on the tree until yellow, they become coarse and far less desirable than when picked green and matured in artificially heated rooms. When thus properly prepared for market, the lemon assumes a position of the highest importance in the human dietary.

Although it is 85 per cent water, even this fact has

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

a bearing on its dietetic value, for the human body itself is principally water, and fluids bathe and protect the various organs—the kidneys, the heart, lungs, stomach and bowels. And lemon juice besides supplying necessary fluid carries food elements of the highest worth. It is rich in mineral salts, without full measure of which the human machine could not carry on its work, and it provides in highest concentration one of the most important vitamins, the antiscorbutic.

Richest in Antiscorbutic Vitamines

HUNDREDS of years before the word vitamine entered our language the medicinal value of lemon juice was widely known. In ancient times soldiers were required to add it to the water they drank, to protect against impurities, and in the Middle Ages the fisher-folk along the coasts of the Mediterranean learned that its acid was necessary to balance a diet composed largely of sea-food.

Sailors discovered that a daily ration of lemon juice would defend them against what formerly was their worst foe—scurvy. In these days, when steamships not only make swift voyages, but are for the most part equipped with cold-storage facilities for keeping fresh meats and vegetables, we cannot appreciate the situation that existed when those who depended on the wind as motive force were often without fresh food for months at a time. Such a diet sooner or later brought on attacks of scurvy, and there are instances a-plenty of whole crews being disabled and of many deaths from this cause.

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

None knew why the lemon held this plague at bay, but its power was so potent that in the seventeenth century the English parliament enacted a law requiring all sailing ships bound for distant ports to carry enough "lime" juice to give each man on board one ounce daily. This was not the juice of the lime, which is not to be compared to lemon in the antiscorbutic power, but of what was known as the lime lemon, a variety once popular.

Recent investigations have proved that the protective power of the lemon is more than four times as great as that of the lime, and this, of course, evidences its higher vitamine content.

When we recognize that without a sufficiency of vitamins in the diet no amount of otherwise nourishing food can be fully sustaining, it is evident that the lemon becomes an essential factor to a wholesome diet. One ounce daily would undoubtedly work miracles for health were it added to the diet of every human being.

An Acid that Prevents Acidity

NEXT to its importance as a source of the antiscorbutic vitamins—the lemon is vitally important as a food by reason of its large content of citric acid. It contains a larger percentage of this acid than any other fruit, and this is by far the most valuable of fruit acids.

Citric acid, found in lemon juice, is absolutely necessary in the diet because it helps to prevent the blood from becoming too acid, a state that favors the development of disease conditions.

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

It is an acid that defends against too much acidity! That this is true seems difficult for many people to understand, for we still hear those suffering from acid condition say, "I cannot use acid fruits." But it is well known to physiologists that the foods we eat have either an acid or an alkaline reaction after being burned in the stomach furnace. Those which supply excess acid are eggs, fish, meats, cereals. Those which lead in counteracting this excess and therefore keep the blood slightly alkaline, as it should be in order to insure normal health, are fruits, vegetables and milk.

When the acids formed by the foods named are not promptly utilized by alkalies supplied by the second group mentioned, they accumulate in the blood and produce a tendency to "acidosis." This is a condition that offers every opportunity for disease germs to get in their disastrous work, and is particularly favorable to the development of skin affections and nose, throat and bronchial troubles. Hyperacidity also is apt to lead to kidney trouble.

So alkaline salts are essential as a means of neutralizing the body fluids, and since the lemon is unusually rich in an acid which becomes alkaline in the process of digestion, its great worth as a maintainer of the necessary alkaline reaction of the blood can be appreciated.

Lemon juice is also notably rich in potassium—food lime—and no mineral is more needed in the building and repairing processes of the body. It also contains a small amount of malic acid—the

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

chief mineral constituent of apples—one half of one per cent of sugar, a considerable percentage of phosphoric acid and some pectose.

A Yellow Pill for Many Perils

IN a very true sense, the two properties I have just discussed are essentially food value. Vitamines and mineral salts are among the food elements which must be included in the diet. But nature is not content to let the lemon rest on these laurels, however secure they make its place in the galaxy of fruits.

As an appetizer, lemon juice is in every way superior to the most praised cocktail that ever sailed under false colors—for cocktails have a “back kick” which more than nullifies any temporary craving for food they may create. Lemon juice is especially valuable to cleanse the stomach of mucus when its juice is used with hot water an hour before meals.

By stimulating the flow of saliva, the most important body fluid, likewise of the gastric juice, the lemon helps to set up a natural desire for food, and goes farther than this in the direction of health by making up for any deficiency of gastric acid which may be present in the stomach.

For many centuries the Chinese, wise in ways of medicine, have used the lemon in treatment of neuralgia by rubbing the affected parts with the wet surface of a fresh cut lemon, and in many nature-cure sanatoria it is employed with marked success in the antiseptic treatment of wounds, bedsores, etc.

Lemon juice is known to possess antiseptic prop-

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

erties, and here is one antiseptic which does not injure the healthy cells and tissues of the body.

Lemonades, made by addition of the juice of one lemon to a quart of water, with two or three ounces of malt sugar added, is frequently used as a desirable thirst-quenching beverage in fever cases. Even very sick patients can, as a rule, drink two or three quarts of this mixture daily without risk.

Lemon whey, made by adding a teaspoonful of fresh lemon juice to a pint of boiling milk, stirring until coagulation takes place, is a valuable drink for fever patients.

The use of lemons in the treatment of gout and obesity is an ancient practice, and for those of a bilious temperament lemon juice has always been recommended. When employed as a flesh-reducer it is not wise to proceed without a doctor's orders and guidance, since an excess of any one kind of food or liquid is apt to bring about undesirable results. Those desiring to get thin are usually too eager for results and act upon the theory the bigger the dose the quicker the cure.

Where malaria is prevalent the value of lemon juice as a protection against this most distressing malady has long been recognized. All in all there is no other fruit which can boast of such varied and valuable medicinal qualities.

Lemon Juice Should Be Preserved

THAT this valuable acid should be more widely used is admitted by all dietitians, and experiments have recently been completed which show that

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

lemon juice can be dried and still preserve its antiscorbutic value. It is believed that such a concentrated preparation will be very important for army use and for localities where fresh fruits and vegetables are scarce. The camper, the hunter, the automobile tourist, the housekeeper of limited storage space, and the lodger minus a refrigerator would all welcome a portable form of this most essential food element, so it is hoped that dried lemon juice will before long become an article of commerce.

Lemon juice can also be bottled. Through careful attention to such hygienic details as sterilization of implements and containers, fresh lemon juice can be preserved for some time, though it must be used within a reasonable period after the bottle has been opened.

In this connection it is a matter of the utmost importance that lemon juice is one of the few vitamine bearing substances that can be sterilized under a temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit without losing its potency in this particular. The thrifty housewife who wants to buy lemons in quantity when they are cheapest, so as to add lemon juice to her store closet, will find that her regular rules for canning are satisfactory. Undoubtedly, if lemon juice were stored among the winter commodities, this invaluable acid would be much more widely used.

The Queen of Fruit Cosmetics

BEFORE we finish this review of the outstanding benefits bestowed through the lemon, it may be seen

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

that this excellent fruit is almost as many-sided as was Benjamin Franklin!

For, besides its food and medicinal values, it now comes forward to claim its place as a really effective cosmetic—and really effective cosmetics are so rare as to demand special attention.

It is not amiss to call lemon juice nature's purest cosmetic, and surely nothing could be more convenient to use, since it requires no preparation and no special skill in application.

For whitening and beautifying the skin it has become increasingly popular within the last few years, and since its acid tends to neutralize the alkali which is found in even the finest soaps, it can be seen that its employment in water in which the face and hands are rinsed is of great value to the skin and complexion.

Its action on the skin, even the most delicate skin, is soothing, cleansing and whitening. It is a bleach which cannot harm, unless it be used to marked excess. And for stains on the fingers there is no better eradicator than a fresh-cut lemon, vigorously applied to the soiled parts. It will also remove blackheads due to impaired circulation of the skin.

In this field it possesses another distinct virtue. It is one of the set foes of that shininess which present-day women so detest and which has made the individual powder puff the most popular of all toilet accessories.

Squeeze a lemon into a basin of fresh water, wash

the face with this liquid, and see how quickly the greasy look disappears from the skin!

Lemon juice also is a manicuring accessory of the utmost value. A teaspoon of it in a cup of hot water makes a mixture which admirably softens the cuticle and at the same time gently bleaches the nail and removes any stains which may be present.

As a remedy for sunburn it is justly popular, and the addition of the juice to the water in which the hair is rinsed after a shampoo will not only give the hair a silken sheen, but at the same time serve as a mild stimulant tonic to the scalp.

A tablespoon of the fresh juice in a half glass of water serves as a pleasing and purifying toothwash.

Last, but Not Least—Flavor !

HAVING detailed the food and medicinal values of this remarkable fruit, we come now to that quality which, above all others, gives to any food its basic value—flavor.

As readers of this series of articles repeatedly have been told, flavor is the prime determining factor in the usefulness of any food—not only because of the palate appeal it makes, but by reason of its power to influence a proper flow of those mouth and stomach juices which must be present in sufficient quantity before any intake of food can be well utilized in nourishment of the body.

The flavor of the lemon, therefore, is one of its salient points. And as its piquant fragrance indicates, this flavor is one of the finest in all nature. There is a tang about the taste of lemon that cannot

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

be got from any other fruit source. It is one of the most grateful flavors with which man is acquainted, and it is powerful as well as pleasing. The best of all tributes to it is shown in the widespread use made of it.

We have lemon candies and lemon pies, lemon drinks and ices, lemon custards and cakes. We use the lemon for adding a note of zest to stewed fruits and fruit sauces. With it we flavor all manner of dressings and sauces.

If we are wise, we use it in place of vinegar in salad dressings, for it not only supplies the needed acid, but in much more healthful form. We follow the Russian custom of putting a slice in the cup of tea, and we squeeze a little of the juice on fish and oysters. This is good sense, for this acid helps to make the sea food more easily assimilable by the system, as well as more pleasing to the palate. In salad dressing too, lemon produces a more delicate flavor than vinegar.

Of lemon drinks there is no end, and they are so healthful that it is well they are so popular. Easily in the lead is lemonade—lemon squash, as our English kin call it—which is used not only as a table drink, but for all manner of informal and formal social affairs.

As a genuine thirst quencher it has no equal, outside of clear, cool water. When our boys were in the trenches in France, they were given daily allowances of lemon drops, for to let a few of these sour candies melt in the mouth was almost the equiva-

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

lent of a cup of water, so far as quenching of thirst was concerned.

This delightful flavor is due to the presence of certain aromatic oils, and these oils, which are contained principally in the rind, are of large commercial value when pressed out. They are used for the manufacture of lemon flavoring extract, and the rinds from which they are pressed are then candied and employed in cake making and the preparation of various desserts, puddings, and confections.

So of the uses of the lemon there seems literally no end, and it is a matter for national rejoicing that we grow in our own land the finest lemons known, and that the supply is annually increasing to bless human beings with health, beauty and nutriment!

RECIPES

Lemon Queen Cakes

Cream together one-half cupful of butter or margarin and one cupful of sugar. When well blended add grated rind and juice of one lemon and three well beaten egg yolks. Mix and sift one and one-half cupfuls of pastry flour, one-fourth teaspoonful of salt, one-third teaspoonful of baking soda. Add to the first mixture, and beat thoroughly. Fold in the stiffly beaten whites of three eggs and bake in small tins in a moderate oven about twenty minutes. Cool, cut off the tops and remove a little of the crumb. Fill with Lemon Jelly Filling, replace tops and sprinkle with powdered sugar or spread with confectioners' sugar icing.

Lemon Jelly Filling

Beat three egg yolks until light, add grated rind and juice of one large lemon, one cupful of sugar and one-half cupful of butter or margarin. Cook over hot water, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Remove from fire, beat in the stiffly beaten egg whites and reheat to the boiling point. Cool and use as filling for Lemon Queen Cakes, Jelly Roll, Layer Cake, etc. This will keep for several weeks if put in a covered jar in the ice box.

Lemon Fruit Whip

Soak two and one-half tablespoonfuls of gelatin in one-fourth cupful of cold water for five minutes. Add one and one-fourth cupfuls of boiling water and three-fourths cupful of sugar and stir until dissolved. Then add one-fourth cupful of lemon juice, grated rind of one-half lemon and cool the mixture until it begins to stiffen. Beat in stiffly beaten whites of two eggs. Put in a glass dish one cupful of stewed figs or prunes cut in small pieces, one orange and one banana cut in thin slices. Pour the gelatin mixture over the fruit and chill before serving. Serve with a custard sauce.

Lemon Tapioca

Stir one-fourth cupful of granulated tapioca into one and one-half cupfuls of boiling water and cook until transparent. Add one cupful of sugar, one-third cupful of lemon juice and one teaspoonful of grated lemon rind. Cool the mixture slightly, then fold in two stiffly beaten egg whites. Chill and serve with custard sauce.

Lemon Souffle

Beat three egg yolks with six tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar and grated rind of one large lemon until very light. Add one tablespoonful of lemon juice and fold in the stiffly beaten whites of three eggs. Pour into a shallow greased dish and bake in a moderate oven about twenty minutes, or until golden brown. Serve immediately.

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

Lemon Filling

Mix three-fourths cupful of sugar and five tablespoonfuls of cornstarch together; add juice and grated rind of two lemons and two well beaten egg yolks. Stir in one and one-half cupfuls of boiling water and cook, stirring constantly, until thick and boiling. Remove from fire, cool and pour into a baked pie shell. Cover with a meringue made of the beaten egg whites and four tablespoonfuls of powdered sugar. Brown meringue in a slow oven. This is enough for one medium sized pie.

Lemon Cheese Tarts

Bake rich pastry over small inverted patty or muffin pans. Cool and fill with the following mixture. Lemon Cheese: Melt one-fourth cupful of butter or margarin in a double boiler, add grated rind and juice of two large lemons, one cupful of sugar and three beaten eggs. Cook, stirring constantly until the mixture starts to thicken, add one-fourth cupful of butter or margarin and continue cooking until as thick as marmalade. Cool before using. This filling will keep a month in a cool place.

Lemon Blanc Mange

Scald one quart of milk in a double boiler. Mix one-half cupful of sugar with five tablespoonfuls of cornstarch and one-eighth teaspoonful of salt. Add one teaspoonful of grated lemon rind, one beaten egg and enough cold milk to make a smooth mixture. Stir in the hot milk and cook over hot water until thick and smooth. Then stir in one tablespoonful of lemon juice and pour into a cold, wet mold. Chill, turn out and garnish with jelly. A ring mold may be used if desired and the center filled with a soft custard that will serve as a sauce.

Lemonade

Put three-fourths cupful of sugar in a quart jar. Roll and slice two lemons as thin as possible. Put the lemon in the jar with the sugar and add a few pieces of cracked ice. Add water to fill the jar to within an inch of the top, cover tightly and shake hard for a few minutes. Strain off the liquid and fill the jar again, shaking as before. A few slices of lime or orange may be added to give variety in flavor. This recipe makes two quarts of delicious lemonade from two lemons.

Lemon Syrup

Wipe lemons with a damp cloth, roll until soft, cut in halves and squeeze out the juice. Grate the rinds of several and add to the juice. Pour into a stone crock, and let stand over night. Strain and measure; allow three pounds of sugar, one egg white and two cupfuls of cold water to each pint of lemon juice. Beat the egg white, add water and stir into the sugar. Heat slowly in a porcelain or agate kettle and, when boiling, skim carefully, add lemon juice

THE INDISPENSABLE LEMON

and boil five minutes. Remove from the fire, let cool, then pour into sterilized bottles or jars and seal. Use two or three teaspoonfuls to a glass of water

Lemon Sandwiches

Cut fresh graham or white bread into thin slices and spread with Lemon Cheese mixture. Put two slices of bread together and cut the sandwiches into two-inch strips. A few chopped pecans or walnuts may be sprinkled over the filling if desired.

Lemon Custards

Beat four egg yolks with one cupful sugar until thoroughly blended. Then add grated rind and juice of one large lemon and one pound of cottage or pot cheese that has been rubbed through a strainer. Mix thoroughly, fold in the stiffly beaten whites of four eggs and pour into well buttered individual ramekin dishes or into small saucers. Stand the molds in a pan of hot water and bake in a moderate oven about twenty-five minutes. Serve cold.

Lemon Sherbet

Mix one quart of water with two and one-half cupfuls of sugar and boil for ten minutes. Remove from fire, add grated rind of two lemons and one and one-half tablespoonfuls gelatin softened in three tablespoonfuls of cold water. Let stand until cold, then add two-thirds cupful of lemon juice or one-half cupful lemon juice and the juice of one orange. Strain and freeze, using two parts finely cracked ice to one of ice-cream salt.

Lemon Drops

Mix very fine granulated sugar with enough lemon juice to make a very thick paste. Then stir over a hot fire with a wooden spoon for about 5 minutes. Remove from the fire and drop from the point of a spoon upon an oiled marble slab or oiled paper. When cold remove from paper. Any fruit juice may be substituted for lemon to make fruit drops of various flavors.

Lemon Pudding

Scald one quart milk and pour over two cupfuls stale bread crumbs. Let stand until soft, then add two-thirds cupful of sugar, two beaten egg yolks, grated rind and juice of one large lemon and two tablespoonfuls of melted butter. Pour into a well-greased shallow baking dish and bake in a moderate oven for about thirty minutes or until firm to the touch. Beat the egg whites to a stiff froth, add one-third cupful of sugar and continue beating until stiff. Spread over the pudding and brown in a slow oven. Serve hot or cold.

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